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24 March 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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Ceylon: The election victory of former prime minister Dudley Senanayake's United National Party (UNP) will probably usher in a regime more sympathetic to Western interests despite a continued non-aligned posture.

In the voting on 22 March the UNP and its allies won enough seats to command a narrow majority in the 157-member House of Representatives. The UNP itself won 66 seats and Senanayake, as prime minister-designate, will be able to name six appointive members. At least ten others will support him, drawn from among independents, minor parties, and five whose defection from Prime Minister Bandaranaike's party last December helped topple her government.

Mrs. Bandaranaike's defeat apparently resulted from her inability to cope with Ceylon's economic problems--nearly depleted foreign exchange reserves, extensive unemployment, and stagnation of industry and commerce. The UNP seems also to have exploited successfully a rising popular distrust of her recently acquired Marxist coalition partners.

Senanayake's victory augurs well for an early settlement with US oil companies whose properties were seized three years ago, resulting in the suspension of US aid to Ceylon. His economic troubles may be complicated, however, by unrest in leftist labor circles. The new government probably will seek emergency Western financial assistance to help it past the critical first six months.

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Argentina: [The extensive gains made by the Peronists in the recent congressional elections have apparently raised serious doubts in the minds of some senior military officers about the government's ability to rule effectively.]

[The various Peronist parties won more than 40 of the 96 seats in the Chamber of Deputies which were contested in the elections and now control 53 of the 192 seats in that body. Of these seats, 36 are held by hard-line followers of Juan Peron who were previously without any representation in Congress.]

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COMMUNIST CHINA: Premier Chou En-lai probably will make several stops in North Africa and the Middle East after attending the funeral of Rumanian party chief Gheorghiu-Dej on 24 March. Press and other reports have suggested that visits to the UAR, Algeria, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen will take place sometime this spring. Chou is also expected to be in Indonesia on 18 April for the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Bandung Conference. Party secretary general Teng Hsiao-ping has been named "acting premier"; the last time such a designation was made was during Chou's ten-country tour of Africa last winter.

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USSR: The Soviet party's central committee met today to deal with agricultural problems, but it will probably also announce further important personnel changes. The meeting is taking place at a time when political maneuvering among the top leaders seems to have sharpened. The assignment on the eve of the meeting of Leonid Ilichev as deputy foreign minister is a sure sign he will be dropped as party secretary in charge of ideological matters and suggests that other changes are in the wind. Ilichev's apparent demotion may be connected with recent personnel shifts which have been aimed at downgrading those officials who played prominent roles in developing the Khrushchev cult.

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